

Questions to Ask Your Doctor

- How severe is my aortic stenosis?
- What might happen if I don't do anything? Can I wait?
- What changes should I make to diet and exercise routines?
- Are there medications I can take to help me feel better?
- What treatment options are available for me with the risks and benefits of each option?
- What is the success rate for this procedure and/or treatment here?
- How long is my recovery time for each option?
- Who is the best person to do the procedure or surgery?

Contact Us

If you would like to receive support or need more information, please contact us at:

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Aortic Stenosis & Valve Replacement



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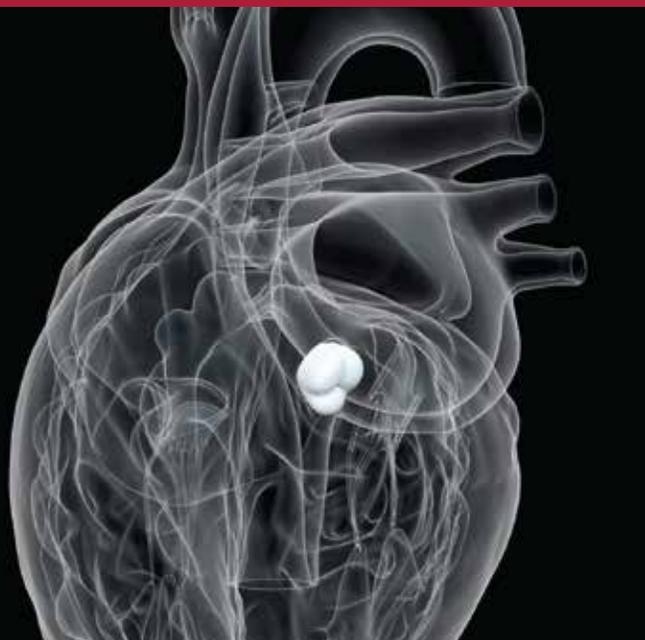
Living Longer with Heart Disease

Understanding Aortic Stenosis & Valve Replacement

What is Aortic Stenosis?

The aortic valve is the door in your heart that allows blood to leave the heart, enter the aorta, and flow throughout your body. A normal aortic valve has three leaflets that open and close to make sure the blood flows in the right direction.

When the leaflets of the aorta become stiff, the opening becomes narrow. This makes it harder for the heart to pump blood to the body. This is called aortic stenosis.



Aortic stenosis is most commonly caused by calcium buildup as a person gets older, but can also be caused by a birth defect, rheumatic fever or radiation therapy.

Signs and Symptoms

When someone has mild or moderate aortic stenosis, they might not have any symptoms. The patient might notice:

- Shortness of breath or feeling like it's hard to breath
- Feeling very tired
- Dizziness or fainting
- Chest pain
- Swelling in the legs

Treatments available

For people with mild or moderate aortic stenosis, their doctor may suggest no treatment and watching to make sure the aortic stenosis doesn't worsen. Sometimes medications may be prescribed to manage the symptoms.

People with severe aortic stenosis may need valve replacement. This may be done during surgery (SAVR) or cardiac catheterization (TAVR) depending on the patient's condition and other factors



Last September, I had a TAVR procedure performed and my life changed dramatically. Today I have lost 30 lbs, walk 20 miles per week and enjoy life. I am 76 years old.

Frank, TAVR Patient

Valve Replacement

Valve replacement can be done through traditional open-heart surgery or through a transcatheter valve replacement procedure. During surgery, the aortic valve is replaced with a new mechanical valve or a valve from a cow, pig or human tissue.

TAVR

Today, many patients are candidates for a less-invasive option called a TAVR. Because it is less-invasive, having a TAVR procedure typically reduces the length of the hospital stay, the risk of infection and recovery time. TAVR is done during a cardiac catheterization, usually through an artery in the leg.

During a TAVR procedure, a collapsible valve is placed in the aortic valve and expanded, pushing the old leaflets out of the way

As with any procedure, there are some risks involved with TAVR, including the risk of stroke. Now, there is a cerebral embolic protection device designed to catch debris during a TAVR procedure, which may reduce the risk of stroke.

Clinical review by:
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